

REMARKS**Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112**

Claims 3-8 and 13 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which Applicants regard as the invention. In response, Applicants have amended these claims to avoid the rejection.

Claim 23 was rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which Applicants regard as the invention. Applicants have amended claim 23 to positively include the extendable curtain which should obviate the rejection.

Claim 33 was rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, which Applicants regard as the invention. In response, Applicants have amended the claim to set out the "which clauses" to make clear the object to which the clause refers. Applicants have also included the requirement of a groove in a wall of the receptacle to further clarify the claim.

Response to Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1, 2, 3, 9-12, 14, 16-22, 33 and 34 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Burbank et al. (U.S. Pub. No. 2002/0165579) in view of Nagel (U.S. Pat. No. 2,400,251).

Applicants have amended claims 1, 22 and 33 to require at least one groove in a wall of the cervical receptacle, which is in fluid communication with the lumen in the

shaft. This amendment should clearly distinguish these claims over the cited reference.

None of the references describe a groove in the wall of the cervical receptacle.

Response to Allowable Subject Matter

The Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication that Claims 4-18 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. However, in view of the amendments to the independent claim, the independent claim is allowable and the dependent claims should likewise be allowable.

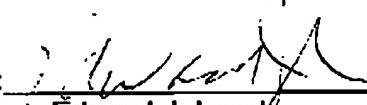
Claims 25-32 were allowed by the Examiner.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that the pending claims are in allowable condition. Further consideration pursuant to the concurrently filed RCE and an early allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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